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SIPDIS

FROM EST COUNSELOR MULENEX FOR OES

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [SENVSENV](#)

SUBJECT: HUBS AND ENVIRONMENTAL DIPLOMACY

REF: STATE 64043

1. SUMMARY. MY STINT AS EST HUB OFFICER IN COPENHAGEN FOLLOWED MY ASSIGNMENT AS SCIENCE OFFICER IN TEL AVIV, AND PRECEDED MY CURRENT ASSIGNMENT AS SCIENCE OFFICER IN ROME. OF THE THREE, ONLY THE ROME ASSIGNMENT IS STRICTLY BILATERAL. REGIONAL WORK, WHETHER ORGANIZED INFORMALLY, AS IN TEL AVIV, OR FORMALLY, AS IN COPENHAGEN, PROVIDES MORE SCOPE FOR
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INFLUENCE THAN A BILATERAL ASSIGNMENT CAN, IF THE REGIONAL WORK IS SUPPORTED BY DEPT. AND WASHINGTON AGENCIES AND BY THE COUNTRY TEAMS OF ALL THE U.S. MISSIONS IN THE ASSIGNED REGION. ADEQUATE PERMANENT STAFF, MONIES SUFFICIENT TO SUPPORT AT LEAST BI-MONTHLY TRAVEL TO ASSIGNED POSTS, AND ENOUGH MONEY FOR REGIONAL SEED PROGRAMS ARE FUNDAMENTAL FOR SUCCESS. AN EFFECTIVE OFFICER WITHOUT THE CONFIDENCE AND TRUST OF COLLEAGUES, OR WITHOUT THE RESOURCES TO GET A SEAT AT THE MULTILATERAL OR REGIONAL PROJECT TABLE, WILL ENJOY VERY LIMITED SUCCESS. IN EVERY CASE, THE SMALLNESS OF HUB OPERATIONS REQUIRES CAREFUL SELECTION OF JUST A FEW ISSUES, WHICH ARE HIGH INTEREST AND HIGH VALUE FOR THE REGION, AND ON WHICH THE HUB CAN MAKE MEASURABLE PROGRESS. END SUMMARY.

INSIDE, OUTSIDE, OR ON THE EDGE?

2. THERE ARE THREE CONTEXTS IN WHICH A SUCCESSFUL HUB HAS TO BE AN INSIDE PLAYER: (1) WITHIN THE COUNTRY TEAMS OF THE EMBASSIES IN THE DESIGNATED REGION; (2) WITHIN THE RELEVANT PARTS OF HOST GOVERNMENTS AND INTERNATIONAL/REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, AND (3) WITHIN THE POLICY FORMATION AND RESOURCE ALLOCATION PROCESS IN THE DEPARTMENT AND OTHER USG AGENCIES. A WELL-STAFFED AND FUNDED HUB WILL BE ABLE TO SUCCEED BY DELIVERING POLICY POSITIONS AND PROGRAMMING OF HIGH VALUE TO SERVICED EMBASSIES, BY REPRESENTING U.S. POLICY AUTHORITATIVELY IN REGIONAL DISCUSSIONS, AND BY BECOMING THE KEY COORDINATOR FOR USG AGENCIES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF U.S. EST POLICIES. THE INTELLECTUAL INTERCHANGE BETWEEN THE HUB AND THE DEPARTMENT HAS TO BE REAL--NOT OFF THE SHELF AND
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GENERIC --AND THE DEPARTMENT NEEDS TO ACCEPT THE SPECIAL OBLIGATION TO CONSULT WITH THE HUB ON ITS CORE ISSUES. THIS IS ESPECIALLY DIFFICULT FOR OES, WHERE MULTIPLE, OFTEN MULTILATERAL TASKS TOO FREQUENTLY BECOME WASHINGTON-CENTRIC, AND THE PRESS TO COORDINATE THE WASHINGTON INTERAGENCY PROCESS, RESULTS IN A LACK OF TIMELY AND PROPERLY TARGETED INFORMATION TO THE FIELD. CATCHING THE HUB UNAWARE WITH A CHANGE OF POSITION CAN BE A REAL PROBLEM.

WHAT'S THE RIGHT SIZE FOR HUBS?

3. A HUB BY ITS NATURE IS NOT A BILATERAL CREATURE, BUT ADDRESSES CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES. ITS RESOURCE PACKAGE MAY VARY BETWEEN REGIONS, AND RESOURCES MAY BE APPLIED UNEVENLY TO INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES IN THE REGION, OR PROGRAM ACTIVITIES, E.G. CONCENTRATING ON WATERSHED MANAGEMENT RATHER THAN COASTAL ZONES AND MARINE ECOSYSTEMS. A FIRST GENERAL RULE MIGHT BE: DON'T COMPETE WITH INDIVIDUAL MISSION RESOURCES. WHILE IN COPENHAGEN, I FOUND THAT EMBASSY STOCKHOLM ASSIGNED AN ECONOMIC OFFICER ALMOST FULLTIME TO EST WORK, PROVIDING MORE BREADTH AND DEPTH THAN I COULD HOPE TO WITH EVEN MONTHLY VISITS. A SECOND RULE IS TO RECOGNIZE IMPORTANT BILATERAL EST ISSUES AND UNDERSTAND THAT THE BILATERAL MISSION IS BEST PLACED TO FOLLOW THOSE ISSUES. IN NORWAY, WHALING WAS SUCH AN ISSUE WHILE I WAS IN COPENHAGEN; SO WAS THE TRILATERAL WORK ON NUCLEAR WASTE. IN GENERAL, I BELIEVE ABOUT ONE-HALF FTE IS NEEDED AT THE HUB FOR EACH POST TO BE SERVED. LESS THAN THIS MEANS THE HUB IS JUST ANOTHER TDY CIRCUIT-RIDER; MORE THAN THIS RAISES QUESTIONS ABOUT WHETHER ADDITIONAL
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POSITIONS, WHETHER FSN OR AMERICAN, SHOULDN'T BE DEVELOPED FOR SERVICED POSTS. WHATEVER THE LEVEL OF HUB STAFFING, AN EXTENDED TEAM CONCEPT IS NEEDED THAT ALLOWS RAPID EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION AMONG POSTS IN THE HUB REGION ON CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES IDENTIFIED BY THE HUB.

LEADING BY TRAVELING, COMMUNICATING, AND NETWORKING LOCALLY

4. WHAT MAKES A HUB VISIT DIFFERENT THAN A VISIT FROM A

WASHINGTON TECHNICAL EXPERT OR A POLICY OFFICIAL? IT'S NOT USUALLY SCIENTIFIC EDUCATION OR FIELD WORK, AND EVEN LESS OFTEN THE AUTHORITY TO MAKE POLICY DECISIONS. IT HAS TO BE LOCAL KNOWLEDGE OF PROBLEMS, OF INSTITUTIONS (INCLUDING SPECIAL INTERESTS AND RIVALRIES), AND OF PEOPLE. IN PRACTICAL TERMS, THIS MEANS A VISIT TO EACH HUB POST EVERY 6-8 WEEKS, WHICH TELLS YOU ABOUT HOW MUCH MONEY YOU NEED FOR TRAVEL AND HOW MANY POSITIONS YOU NEED AT THE HUB. IN COPENHAGEN, I LEARNED THAT THE REAL DECISIONS FOR BALTIC-NORDIC COOPERATION WERE TAKEN IN A VARIETY OF EU AND OTHER REGIONAL FORA, AND GAINING ACCESS TO THOSE MEETINGS AS A QUALIFIED OBSERVER WAS THE KEY TO INTRODUCING U.S. IDEAS INTO PROGRAMS WE HAD FEW FUNDS TO SUPPORT. WE COULD HELP WITH EXPERTS IN MANY CASES, AND BUILD JOINT WORKSHOPS AND TECHNICAL EXCHANGES. TO MANAGE

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ACTION OES-01

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	ITC-01	L-00	NASA-01	AC-01	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	NSF-01
	OIC-02	PM-00	PRS-00	ACE-00	SP-00	IRM-00	SSO-00
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AN EFFECTIVE HUB REQUIRES NEAR STATE OF THE ART INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES AND AN OPEN NET SYSTEM, SUPPORTED BY SCANNERS, FAXES, LAPTOPS FOR TRAVELLING, AND CELL PHONES. THE HUB HAS TO STAY IN TOUCH WITH ITS USG CONSTITUENCY AND ITS BROADER NETWORK OF COOPERATING INDIVIDUALS AND INSTITUTIONS.

POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

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15. HUBS UNFORTUNATELY DO NOT RELIEVE SHORTSTAFFED MISSIONS OR SEP POSTS OF THE BURDEN FOR PREPARING, DELIVERING AND REPORTING ON DEMARCHES, ALTHOUGH THE HUB SHOULD BE A LOCAL RESOURCE HELPFUL IN PROVIDING THE BACKGROUND TO AN ISSUE, OR IN CLARIFYING THE SOMETIMES LENGTHY TECHNICAL INFORMATION PROVIDED ON ISSUES LIKE CHEMICALS MANAGEMENT. ON A FEW OCCASIONS I WAS ASKED TO JOIN A SERVICED POST TEAM IN MAKING A PARTICULAR DEMARCHE, BECAUSE OF THE IMPORTANT ROLE THAT COUNTRY WAS EXPECTED TO PLAY IN MULTILATERAL DISCUSSIONS. HUB OFFICER SHOULD BE MORE CONVERSANT WITH EST ISSUES THAN MOST OF THE OFFICERS ON THEIR REGIONAL TEAM. FOR THIS REASON, IT IS PROBABLY UNWISE TO NAME AN OFFICER TO A HUB WHO HAS NEITHER DEPT., OTHER AGENCY, OR PREVIOUS OVERSEAS EST EXPERIENCE.

16. PROGRAMMATICALLY, THE SAME RULE APPLIES. AN EXPERIENCED OFFICER IS MORE LIKELY TO BE KNOWLEDGEABLE IN DISCUSSIONS WITH HOST GOVERNMENTS, NGOS, AND REGIONAL BODIES THAN A NOVICE. EXPERIENCED OFFICERS ARE ALSO LIKELY TO HAVE A NETWORK OF CONTACTS INTO OTHER AGENCIES WHICH ARE, FRANKLY SPEAKING, MORE LIKELY TO HAVE SUPPORTING EXPERTISE AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES. PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT WITH MULTIPLE PARTNERS IS A COMPLEX UNDERTAKING, AND EXPERIENCE IS A REAL ASSET IN SORTING OUT WHO DOES WHAT, WHEN, AND HOW. I LEARNED A GREAT DEAL ABOUT PROGRAM MANAGEMENT FROM MY WORK AS A GRANT OFFICER FOR USAID PROGRAMS IN TEL AVIV, AND WITHOUT THE EXPERIENCE OF RUNNING SCIENCE COOPERATIVE GRANTS IN TWENTY COUNTRIES, I COULD NOT HAVE MANAGED THE COPENHAGEN START-UP.

GLOBAL WARRIORS FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY?
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17. SOME WILL RECALL THESE WORDS OF TIM WIRTH; THOSE WHO DO RECALL THAT THE WORDS WERE JUST THAT. THE HUBS REPRESENT A HALFWAY HOUSE IN THE MOVE FROM OUR LONG-STANDING ADDICTION TO BILATERAL ACTION IN A MULTILATERAL EST WORLD. WHILE THERE WILL REMAIN SOME NEED FOR BILATERAL APPROACHES AND COUNTRY SPECIFIC S&T RELATIONSHIPS, THE NEED FOR THE MOST EXPERIENCED EST OFFICERS TO FILL EXCLUSIVELY BILATERAL JOBS MAY BE

CHANGING IF THE PROGRAM ANALYSIS PERFORMED BY THE DEPT.
CONFIRMS MY EXPERIENCE, HUBS REPRESENT A VALID APPROACH TO
THE PERSONAL NETWORK BUILDING NEEDED FOR MORE EFFECTIVE
ACTION ON A REGIONAL LEVEL. PROBABLY MORE SUPPORT IN TERMS OF
POSITIONS, BUDGET, AND EQUIPMENT IS NEEDED, CONSISTENT WITH
WHAT I'VE ALREADY SAID.

18. IT'S THEREFORE IMPORTANT TO PUT SOLID EXPERIENCED OFFICERS
IN THE HUBS. FROM MY BILATERAL POSITION IN ROME, I RUB UP
EVERY DAY AGAINST ISSUES WHICH I COULD WORK MORE EFFECTIVELY
ACROSS THE REGION. YET THE ROME BILATERAL POSITION IS MORE
SENIOR, RANK-WISE, THAN THE HUB POSITIONS WHICH OFFER MORE
SCOPE TO WORK OUR MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES. THIS IS AN ARTIFACT
OF A PRE-INTERNET, COLD WAR APPROACH TO EST "IN CAPITALS", AS
THE CABLES SAY. THE DEPT. MAY WANT TO USE THE HUB STUDY AS A
FOIL FOR A CAREFUL RECONSIDERATION OF OVERALL EST POSITIONS
ABROAD.

19. A FINAL NOTE: THE HUBS ESTABLISHED TO DATE HAVE
GEOGRAPHIC, NOT INTELLECTUAL, PROPERTY. WHILE ENVIRONMENTAL
PROBLEMS ARE LOCAL, THEY OFTEN HAVE REGIONAL OR GLOBAL CAUSES
AND INFLUENCES. I HAVE LONG ADVOCATED THE NEED TO INTEGRATE
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SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND PUBLIC HEALTH IN OUR HUB WORK, AND
THAT WAS MY PRACTICE BOTH IN TEL AVIV AND COPENHAGEN. PERHAPS
IT'S TIME TO CONSIDER THE MERITS OF A HUB THAT TAKES AS ITS
CORE WORK A MAJOR THEME, LIKE SUSTAINABILITY IN ALL ITS
MULTIPLE AND CONFLICTING MEANING, AND ITS CHALLENGES TO
SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, HEALTH, ENVIRONMENT, TRADE AND
INVESTMENT, INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE AND GOOD GOVERNANCE.
THIS IS TAILOR MADE FOR THE U.S-EU AGENDA, AND FOR ITALY IN
PARTICULAR AS IT LOOKS TO THE MEDITERRANEAN BASIN AND TO
AFRICA. IT'S MY MODEST SUGGESTION FOR A HUB WE COULD CREATE
AND STAFF TO SUPPORT THE POST-JOHANNESBURG AGENDA.

19. THANK YOU FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE IDEAS IN SUCH A
PERSONAL WAY.
SEMBLER

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